

Annual Report:

The work of IMSA's Archives During the
Academic years, 2019-2020 & 2020-2021

Preface:

The IMSA Archives, housed in the Leto M. Furnas Information Resource Center, serves to collect and preserve materials relating to the history and ethos of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. The Archives includes both special and general collections with materials about IMSA's establishment, led by Dr. Leon Lederman and Governor James Thompson. There are materials about the Academy's opening in the fall of 1986 and its development since, as well as about its ideas and programs and how they evolved. Included are sample curricula, presidential speeches, samples of student work, as well as material about and from partnership programs for educators and schools. Archives has both student and institutional publications as well as a great deal of iconographic material ranging from posters to snapshots. All of the materials illuminate the lives of IMSA's students, alumni/ae, faculty and staff on campus and out in the wide, wide world.

Documents and images from the Archives can also be found in the "Archives & Special Collections" section on IMSA's [Digital Commons](#) [DC] site. In addition, some documents and images not otherwise available in IMSA's Archives can be found in DC.

[Disclaimer: The Archives does not attempt to fulfill IMSA's obligations under the State of Illinois' record-keeping requirements for state agencies. Those records that IMSA is required to keep are housed in separate repositories, like the Registrar's Office for student records, personnel records in the Human Resources office and so on.]

Introduction:

On the ides of March (well almost) in the year 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic closed IMSA abruptly. Students went home, faculty went home, staff and administrators went home. The archivist had gone home two days earlier leaving activity logs and other documents in the building and they would not become accessible for some time. However, just as teaching and learning did not stop but moved on-line, so did much of the other work of the institution, including that of Archives. The record of that work focused on the projects that were taken on, yet absent the log, time spent on that work was not recorded. Nonetheless the work still falls within the same four domains addressed in previous reports.

*The quote on the title page was inspired by the collections campaign slogan of the Danish National Museum, seen in Copenhagen April, 2015. [Trans. By Nøkkentved]

Once the Academy closed, the physical collections were left largely to fend for themselves, though they were not ignored completely. Artifacts and documents were used in the making of several videos, and references to as well as descriptions of those collections became part of the online projects. Moreover, during the roughly three quarters of the academic year 2019-2020 before the abrupt closure of school, the work of the archives proceeded normally with additions to and curation of the physical as of the digital collections; exhibits were designed and mounted; and all the other services that require a physical presence were provided by the Archives. This report will, therefore report on the work done both before and after the Academy's March 2020 closure.

Domains:

1. Maintenance of the current collections:

Since the last Annual Report, work on the current collections has continued. The materials in several Record Groups [RG], including RG 14, Office of Institutional Research; RG 19, Information and Technology Services; and RG 21 Information Resource Center, have been curated and reorganized. In RG 24, the materials from former History and Social Science teacher Bernard Hollister were curated and reorganized. In RG 6A, speeches from the Stephanie Pace Marshall [SPM] collection have been arranged chronologically, in part with the help of student workers, and identifying those speeches which should be digitized has been started. In addition, an extensive set of papers related to the National Consortium of Special Secondary Schools in Mathematics, Science and Technology [NCSSSMST] also from the SPM collection, has been curated and reorganized.

After the closure of the building, work in this domain moved on line. The first major project was to proofread, edit and update the new digital Finding Aid. While this work filled a significant portion of the 2019-2020 academic year and the first part of the next, implementing the edits requires that those efforts continue on site. Planning for enriching the Founders Collection with materials from the presidency of Stephanie Pace Marshall moved forward and curating documents was begun to the extent doing so remotely was possible. This is an ongoing project, and the plan is to meet with Dr. Marshall in the near future to continue curating and digitizing portions of the collection.

2. Collections Development and Accessibility:

In this domain, the pre-pandemic months were spent primarily on developing the physical collections. Contributions of IMSA apparel were processed and added and there are now have five large boxes of IMSA Apparel [RG 46]. In addition, Archives received three significant contributions of papers, which were curated and filed. Ruth Dover, from the Math team, contributed a large selection of teaching materials, some in ring binders and some in folders [RG 25]. This has now been placed in archive folders and boxes and labeled. Christian Nøkkentved contributed all his teaching files (The Dr. Nok. Collection) [in RG 24]. Included are one folder for each class he taught between 1988 and 2013 and

for the several classes he taught since then as a substitute, as well as some supplementary materials all which has been curated and housed in archive boxes. Phyllis Chestnut from the Admission office contributed photographs, artifacts and documents about the Dance Squad, which she sponsored for many years. Lastly, work on the Oral History Project continued, despite some technical problems which led to the unfortunate loss of one interview video.

During the pandemic with one exception, the work in this domain turned primarily to issues of accessibility. Thanks to her expertise, Sara Goek (class of 2006) was able to continue work on the [Oral History Project](#), one of the digital collections. Working remotely, Dr. Goek was able to record, create the meta-data for, and up-load 16 oral histories of alumni/ae, as well as of former faculty and staff. Collecting the oral histories this way, made it possible to interview people from all parts of the country, something we will undoubtedly continue even when face-to-face again becomes possible. To further expand information about and access to the Archives, significant time and energy went into creating a web-page and a users' guide or [LibGuide](#) to the Archives and its collections (). The guide includes extensive links to collections, policies, practices of, and services provided by the Archives.

3. Services:

Both before and during the pandemic, the Archives continued to provide services to the institution and its stake holders. In June of 2019, the Annual Report for 2018-2019 was completed and distributed. Later that summer, Archives, as in the past, held an open house on alumni week-end, with special exhibits for each of the six honor years (1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014), as well as an exhibit in the Archives itself. Other exhibits were designed and mounted. The IMSA apparel and ISSF exhibits were dismounted and the contents were stored. New exhibits of IMSA souvenirs, and post cards from IMSA students abroad to Dr. Nøkkentved were created. Materials were found for a student and an alumna working on a Leon Lederman project for Fermi Lab. Several notices in the series "News From The Archives" on the Alumni Association's FaceBook page were written as was an article for the newsletter of the Midwest Archives Association.

The pandemic changed but did not stop the services provided by the Archives. The alumni weekend in 2020 became "virtual toasts" and for the six honor years. Galleries of images and documents were created on Digital Commons replacing the traditional exhibits. Six virtual tours of the Archives videos were scripted and recorded, and the archivist attended all six virtual toasts. In addition, the usual services like questions, though now only via email or phone, were answered, and on-line documents as requested were found, and so on. Lastly, despite the difficulties, several meetings (observing all the mitigations required) were held in the Archives with Jean Bigger, the archivist and Joyce Symoniak, the faculty sponsor of the year book, to plan and find images and documents for Gallimaufry 2021. Ms. Symoniak and the student yearbook team were thus able to create a memorable yearbook for an academic year without students on campus.

4. Operations:

Operations continue to depend on one professional archivist volunteer, student volunteers and service workers, as well as help from the library staff. Here it should be noted that what was accomplished also depended on the expertise and work of Jean Bigger, who also contributed in practical ways like mounting exhibits, or supervising student volunteers, to name just two. This past year Archives continued to operate without a budget, except for a small fund from contributions, including from alums and Dr. Jose Torres, IMSA's former President.

Below is a table of the hours contributed to the Archives between 7 August, 2019 and 11 March, 2020 by the archivist as well as several student workers. (The hours contributed by the Library staff are not included herein.) Hours were not recorded between the closing of school in March 2020 and the end of the academic year.

Person(s)	Hours
The volunteer archivist (Reduced from two to one volunteer)	192
Students assigned to the Library	35

Since the closing of school, electronic communication made much of the work possible. Telephone conversations, email, Zoom-meetings, GoogleDocs, and websites played key roles, and depended on the personal equipment of the archivist and others. At several points it was possible to use on-campus facilities to complete several projects like the virtual tours of the Archives for the virtual alumni/ae weekends. The Archives' support of the yearbook also required several on-campus meetings and the physical transfer of images as well as electronic transfers, of course.

Conclusion and Goals:

While the pandemic presented difficulties for the Archives, as it did for so many, work was nonetheless continued. In fact, to overcome those difficulties much was learned and some things were accomplished that otherwise might not have been. Time became available for the process of editing and updating the on-line Finding Aid, an ongoing project. Doing the oral histories remotely has resulted in some wonderful additions to that collection some of which geography made impossible. The Archives' web-page and the LibGuide might very well have come along at some point, but were completed so much sooner since those projects lent themselves to remote work. The virtual tours of the Archives and the on-line galleries and exhibits created for the virtual alumni/ae reunions have turned out to be useful as they make it possible for those alums who cannot come to campus for reunions to still

participate, and in general have created more curated collections accessible to all our stakeholders and the general public.

During this academic year, the plan is to continue several of the projects started during the pandemic. Curating and adding to the SPM collection is ongoing, and the hope is to include Dr. Marshall directly in this project. There are still sufficient funds and Dr. Goek has agreed to continue work on the Oral History Project. As always, Archives will participate actively in this year's alumni/ae reunion, which will again be done remotely. Lastly, to the extent resources are available, the ongoing work of editing and updating the Finding Aid will be continued.

Respectfully submitted:

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